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Operator defends critical Internet site

LOHR McKINSTRY, Staff Writer

TUPPER LAKE — Former Tri-Lakes resident Edward Madgeson may have started an Internet Web site that criticizes local officials, but he says did it as a public service. He says he's responsible for some but not all the comments posted on badbusinessbureau.com criticizing Saranac Lake Village Police Chief Donald Perryman, Franklin County Assistant District Attorney Jack Delehanty, a Ray Brook restaurant, Sunmount State Development Center and a host of other public officials.

The Press-Republican reported on Madgeson's "Rip-Off Report" site April 8 but hadn't been able to reach him for comment. The site lists a Charleston, West Indies, address.

On Thursday, Madgeson said he's actually in southern California, having just moved from Arizona.

"I own the Web site. I don't know who everyone is who posts there," Madgeson said.

"I'm striving very hard to be a success with this, to make a difference. People who were violated, I'm standing for their civil and human rights."

When Madgeson lived in Saranac Lake, he filed a lawsuit alleging Saranac Lake Village Police pulled him over constantly and without valid cause. It was dismissed in County Court.

Madgeson said he disagrees with Delehanty's statement that he (Madgeson) had trouble with everybody when he was in the area.

"I didn't have problems with everybody. I had problems with a few people," Madgeson said.

"I became a target. These villages did things to me, because I was an outsider."

At various times from 1985 to 1990, Madgeson was a resident of Tupper Lake, Saranac Lake and Malone. He owned the Northland Hotel in Tupper Lake, Santanoni Apartments in Saranac Lake and the Hotel Franklin in Malone.

He said he was unjustly arrested for taking a piggy bank from a tenant, and, although the case was dismissed, he never got his $600 bail returned.

"I still haven't gotten it back," he said.

"I don't wish any of these people harm, or bad, even Jack Delehanty," the prosecutor on the case.

"He basically got run out" of the area, Delehanty said in the April 8 story.

"The comment that I was run out of town. How was I run out of town? Did the police tell me to get out by dawn?" Madgeson said.

"I did have enough of the aggravation. Enough was enough. I never had a lot of money, Jack Delehanty said, but how did I get the properties? I lost a lot of money."

Madgeson also said he wasn't thrown out of the Tail O' the Pup restaurant in Ray Brook, as owner Edward Yanchitis implied.

"Nobody threw me out," Madgeson said. "I ate and left my wallet. I was out of the state when I noticed it. They charged my credit card. How could I eat $99 in food?"

Yanchitis said the dispute with Madgeson was over a credit-card bill that was mistakenly charged twice, and both charges were removed when the error was discovered.

Madgeson said Delehanty even sent a rebuttal to criticism of him on the Web site.

"I didn't change anything," Madgeson said. "It ran just as he submitted it."

The badbusinessbureau.com Web site lets people who feel they've been wronged by a business or local government post their opinions. Others can then add their comments of support or disagreement.

Madgeson said he loved the North Country but is glad he left, because of the harassment he received.

"I don't mean any harm to any of those idiots there," he said. "I don't want to be their enemy. Let the chips fall where they may.

"I've been touted as a high-tech vigilante on the trail of bilkers. I feel that I've helped a lot of people. I feel good about what I do."

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